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Extension for the Emergency Declaration on the Opioid Epidemic

The Trump Administration extended its emergency declaration for the opioid epidemic. In a [notice](#) posted to the Department of Health and Human Services website in late January, Acting Secretary Hargan renewed the declaration, effective January 24, 2018, because of the “determination that a public health emergency exists nationwide as a result of the consequences of the opioid crisis.” The designation gives federal health agencies the authority to quickly hire more treatment specialists and reallocate money to strengthen the response to the epidemic.

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Affordable Care Act (ACA) Open Enrollment

The 2018 ACA Open Enrollment period ended December 15, 2017. If a client’s 2017 plan is not available and the insurer is no longer offering plans in the Marketplace for 2018, the client may be eligible for a special enrollment period through February 28, 2018. Contact Benalytics at (855) 483-4647 or VDH at (855) 362-0658 for more information.

Additional information about the 2018 open enrollment period can be found on the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) ACA [webpage](#).

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ADAP Enrollment

VDH saw a record number of ACA enrollments for 2018. This would not have been accomplished without the assistance of community partners, Benalytics, DDP hotline staff, and Virginia ADAP staff. Thank you all for your hard work to ensure that the ADAP population has access to insurance and medications for 2018!

ADAP Enrollment Numbers as of January 16, 2018:

- Total: 6,584
- Direct ADAP: 1,421
- Medicare Part D Assistance Program: 589
- Insurance Continuation Assistance Program: 604
- Health Insurance Marketplace Assistance Program: 3,970

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Updated: Virginia Transgender Resource & Referral List

The Virginia Transgender Resource & Referral List has been updated and expanded to include new listings for trans-friendly and affirming service providers, including an array of medical, legal, mental health, support group, advocacy, and other services across the state. The list is organized by region and alphabetically within regions. The direct link to this resource is [here](#), and can be found on the VDH Transgender Health Services & Support [page](#). Also included is the newly-updated Resource & Referral List [form](#) for service providers wishing to be added to the list. Updates to the form include modernized language, since the language about gender identities has evolved significantly since development of the form in 2005, and some additional information to better understand and describe available services.

Questions about the list and form should be directed to [Ted Heck](#) at (804) 864-8012. Also, please note that there are other resources not included on the referral list, often because agencies or individuals have not requested to be listed. Please contact Ted for assistance if you cannot find a needed service.

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Testing Page Updated

Staff from HIV Prevention, STD Surveillance, Operations, & Data Administration (SODA), and Hepatitis collaborated to combine testing information into one easy-to-navigate page on the external DDP website. The [new site](#) includes information about who should be tested, where to get tested, and what to do if you test positive.

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Participate in the Annual Condom Distribution Program Survey

Please help us to ensure that DDP's Condom Distribution Program is meeting the needs of our partners and communities. We are asking you to complete this [brief survey](#), which will take about 5-7 minutes to complete. You may estimate numbers and percentages. Thank you in advance for your help.

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Agencies Awarded Funding for Community HIV Testing (CHT) Program

In December 2017, 11 agencies across the Commonwealth were awarded a total of

\$1,100,000 to conduct HIV testing in nonclinical settings: AIDS Response Effort, Council of Community Services, Fredericksburg Area HIV/AIDS Support Services, Health Brigade, Inova Juniper, LGBT Life Center, Minority AIDS Support Services, Minority Health Consortium, Nationz Foundation, NovaSalud, Inc., and Thomas Jefferson Health District. Please contact [Bryan Collins](#), Community HIV Testing Coordinator, if you have questions regarding the CHT Program.

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New Continuing Education Activity on HIV Delays

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) and Medscape are offering a new free continuing medical education (CME) activity that describes diagnosis delay among persons infected with HIV: [Vital Signs: Human Immunodeficiency Virus Testing and Diagnosis Delays — United States](#).

This activity is intended for infectious disease clinicians, family medicine specialists, internists, nurses, pharmacists, public health officials, and other clinicians caring for patients with, or at risk, for HIV infection.

Upon completion of this activity, participants will be able to describe diagnosis delay among persons infected with HIV and missed opportunities for HIV testing based on CDC's National HIV Behavioral Surveillance; identify the proportions of persons in various high-risk populations who tested for HIV in the past 12 months; and determine the clinical and public health implications of these findings regarding HIV testing, missed opportunities for testing, and diagnosis delay among persons infected with HIV.

For users without a current Medscape login, please access CME activities [here](#).

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Two New Training Modules Provided by His Health

NASTAD (National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors) has announced the launch of two new continuing education modules, *Whole Health Assessment 2.0* and *PrEP 2.0* on HisHealth. HisHealth is an online resource created in partnership with the Health Resources Services Administration's HIV/AIDS Bureau to offer free and accredited self-paced online trainings for healthcare providers and public health professionals. The two new modules are a continuation of the PrEP and Whole Health Assessment Module, and provide a myriad of tools to help trainees better understand the intersecting issues that impact the overall physical, emotional, and mental well-being of young Black men who have sex with men (MSM). The trainers discuss behavioral and mental health disparities, the importance of integrating discussions of sexual pleasure into provider-patient conversations, and the many factors that affect engagement, linkage, and retention to care among young Black MSM. Additionally, the module delves into the recommended behavioral health assessments for Black MSM, including screenings for anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder. For more information, visit www.HisHealth.org.

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Case Management Summit

VDH, in collaboration with the MidAtlantic AIDS Education Training Centers Virginia Regional Partners and Virginia HIV/AIDS Resource and Consultation Center, will hold the third annual Case Management Summit called “Planting Seeds of Change.” Designed to provide medical and non-medical case managers an opportunity to discuss issues, best practices, and network with colleagues from other parts of the state, the Summit will be held March 2-3, 2018 at the Richmond Marriott Short Pump, 4240 Dominion Boulevard, Glen Allen, Virginia. Agenda topics include motivational interviewing, peer review findings, understanding trauma-informed care, self-care for case managers, and other relevant case management topics.

Interested participants can register [online](#) using the event code: CMVA. The deadline to request a hotel room has already closed. For additional information, please contact either [Robert Rodney](#) or [Safere Diawara](#).

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February is National Condom Month

When used correctly and consistently, condoms are an important part of our work in preventing HIV and STDs. Take advantage of National Condom Month to give an extra boost to your condom distribution. If you are not already signed up for the free VDH Condom Distribution Program or haven't ordered any recently, please contact [Beth Marschak](#) at (804) 864-8008. Both health districts and community partners are eligible, and may order up to 100 cases a year (100,000 condoms).

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MMWR - Prevention of Hepatitis B Virus Infection in the United States

CDC has published an MMWR article, [Prevention of Hepatitis B Virus Infection in the United States: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices](#), which updates and summarizes previously published recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and CDC regarding the prevention of hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection in the United States. These recommendations provide CDC guidance for post-exposure prophylaxis following occupational and other exposures. The report also summarizes previously published American Association for the Study of Liver Disease guidelines for maternal antiviral therapy to reduce perinatal HBV transmission.

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DIS (Disease Intervention Specialists) Statewide Meeting on Syphilis

SODA hosted a statewide meeting on syphilis in early February. Approximately 50 DIS and supervisors attended the interactive two-day training featuring presentations by Dr. Anne Rompalo of the Johns Hopkins Training Center, Melinda Salmon from CDC, and numerous internal speakers. Resources from the meeting will be posted to the internal webpage in the next few weeks.

PERSONNEL

Welcome



SODA welcomes **Hussain Ibrahim** as the new Public Health Informatics Specialist. Hussain has a bachelor's degree in computer science and holds several professional certifications in project management, information technology infrastructure, and SQL. Hussain will be responsible for creating a reporting infrastructure for Maven and assisting with data and database management of Maven and other databases. He is available at (804) 864-8017 or Hussain.Ibrahim@vdh.virginia.gov.

Congratulations

SODA congratulates **Whitney Glascock** in her new role as Executive Secretary for the Office of Epidemiology. We thank her for all her hard work over the years, and wish her well in her new position!

HIV Prevention Services welcomes **Debbie Woodson**.

She joined the team in January as the PrEP Data Technician. For many years, Debbie was an Office Services Specialist in SODA. In her new role, Debbie will be assisting with data processing, compiling STD data related to PrEP patients, and conducting quality assurance activities on PrEP data. Debbie will also serve as back-up for the PrEP Program Support Specialist, ensuring PrEP applications are processed in a timely manner and patients receive their medication without interruption. To contact Debbie by phone, call (804) 864-7995 or contact her by e-mail at debbie.woodson@vdh.virginia.gov.



SODA congratulates **Keshana Richardson** in her new position in the administrative unit within the Office of Epidemiology. We thank her for all her hard work, and wish her well in her new position!

Congratulations to **Tania Butler** on her new position as an ADAP Operations Specialist. She has been a valuable HCS team member since 2014 as an ADAP Operations Technician. Tania can be reached at tania.butler@vdh.virginia.gov.

HCS congratulates **Julie Karr** on her new position of ADAP Operations Specialist. Julie worked with HCS as the PrEP/ADAP Technician before moving to the PrEP position full time in April 2017. HCS is happy to have her back. Julie can be reached at julie.karr@vdh.virginia.gov.

Transitions

In late January, **Megan Rei**, Regional DIS Coordinator for Northern, transitioned into a part-time contractual DIS role in the Northern and Northwest regions in order to

pursue a personal endeavor. While Megan's position is in recruitment, [Jeff Pagan](#), Field Operations Co-Manager, will provide coverage for the position's duties.

Personnel Spotlight: DDP Web Team

Each unit within DDP has selected representatives to serve on the DDP Web Team. Individually, these team members take special care that the entire DDP website is updated with important, timely, and easy-to-understand information. The team meets every other month to discuss division-wide topics related to the website, information organization, and collaboration between units. Team members also act as liaisons to their respective unit directors for necessary approvals.

To report any errors on the website or to provide feedback, contact [Chris Barnett](#), Social Media Coordinator, to have your comments directed to the appropriate team member.

Please take a moment to acknowledge the members of the web team:



Pictured from left to right: Ted Heck, Chris Barnett, Chelsea Caumont, Emily Cothran, Lauren Yerkes, and Rachel Culp. Not Pictured: Sharon Carter-Hall, Carrie Rhodes, Lenny Recupero, Amanda Saia, and Randy Stepanek.

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